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TEAMSTER CONVOY DISPATCH

109

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975

April 1992 #113

Northwest Flight Attendants Say:

'New Teamsters, Yes!'

Right after a Christmas break, weeks before he was sworn into office, Ron Carey was back on the road, shaking hands at airports and talking to many of the 8,400 Teamster flight attendants at Northwest Airlines who were planning to leave the Teamsters union. Disgusted with their previous treatment by the IBT, over 70% of them had signed cards to switch to the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), another AFL-CIO union.

Most of the flight attendants had supported Carey in the delegate elections, and had voted for Carey in the December IBT elections. Now it was up to Carey to win them back as Teamster members. On March 12, the votes were counted, and the Teamsters won by a surprising 2-1 margin. The situation had been turned around. A spokesperson for the AFA said, "It's not what we expected four months ago, but then we didn't know Ron Carey was going to be there."

The New Teamsters scored a victory because the members saw something new happening, and they liked it.

New Excitement Spreads Through Union

The Northwest flight attendants aren't the only ones responding to the changes in our union. Teamsters all over the country and in widely different jurisdictions are reacting to the Carey victory by increasing their activity. Even some old guard officers are being swept up by the union's new mandate from the members. There's a new atmosphere, higher expectations and a greater willingness to act.

Carhaul Corporate Campaign

Take the example of the Teamster carhaulers. They have been working under an extension of their contract since June 1 of last year. They voted down a concessionary contract offer in December by 74%. The Carey administration took over and immediately sent out a new message: no concessions, the old days of "go along and get along" are over.

The International started targeting the biggest carhaul corporation, Ryder Systems, by leafletting Ryder

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Back-Pay Award of $8-$10 Million

IBT Wins Arbitration on UPS Wage Progression

UPS Teamsters who were on the wage progression schedule on or before July 31, 1990, will have back-pay checks coming their way sometime in the future—claims worth an estimated $8-$10 million!

The long-disputed grievance over the August 1, 1990, and August 1, 1991, 50-cent wage increases and the calculation of the wage progression schedule took some 19 months to resolve—and the checks have yet to be cut by UPS—after having been deadlocked at the national committee level last year. A neutral arbitrator ordered on Feb. 18:

"... that the Company promptly pay to each employee on a wage progression schedule on July 31, 1990, an amount equal to the difference between the pay he or she has actually received for the period from August 1, 1990 to the date of implementation of this award and the pay he or she should have received for such period had his or her progression rate been calculated on the basis of the sum of the wage rate in effect on July 31, 1990 plus the general wage increases of 50 cents per hour on August 31, 1990 and, to the extent applicable, August 1, 1991."

UPS argued that all employees on progression, whether hired before, on or after August 1, 1990, should have their progression based on the top rate in effect on July 31, 1991. But the contract clearly stated that employees on the payroll on or before July 31, 1990, including those on progression, would receive the general wage increases and the arbitrator ruled that they "should have had their progression rates calculated on the basis of the sum of the July 31, 1990 rate and any applicable general wage increases. ..."

Predictably, UPS is contesting the "interpretation" of the arbitrator's decision.

We Proved We Can Win

With the IBT election in December, we learned that an organized rank and file can win. Now we are taking that experience into our locals, our contracts and our shops to make a stronger Teamsters union, from top to bottom. That's TDU's goal, and we've shown we can reach our goals. But we need your support. Help make it happen—

JOIN TDU TODAY!

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Company _____

❑ City ❑ Road ❑ Dock ❑ Clerical ❑ Warehouse ❑ Construction ❑ Production
❑ Other _____

Optional: Spouse's name _____

❑ $30 membership fee for one year's membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch.*

❑ $75 three-year membership fee. ($10 shall be rebated to the local chapter.)

❑ $15 for spouses, retirees and Teamsters who gross less than $12,000 a year.

❑ Check or money order
❑ Mastercard/Visa # _____ Exp. date ____/____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Michigan 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential from employers and union officials.
TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, and from individual retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers.

Teamsters for a Democratic Union
P.O. Box 10128
Detroit, Mich. 48210
(313) 842-2600

This paper is paid for and distributed by concerned Teamsters. We invite you to do your part—join TDU to help improve our union. See application form on this page.

UNION SOLIDARITY

Mine Workers Face H&W Crisis

The threat of national strikes in the coal fields this summer appears to have been averted by a court ruling forcing union coal companies to increase their health and welfare contributions to cover retiree health benefits. But the short-term solution may make finding a long-term answer more difficult for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The crisis stems from a sharp decline in the number of companies covered by the national coal contract; many old companies have gone out of business, while many new ones are operating non-union. This leaves only 300 unionized companies to support 120,000 retirees, who have been promised lifetime health insurance. Only 30,000 of these retirees worked for companies that are now contributing to the industry's health care funds.

The UMWA fears that the Bituminous Coal Operators Association (BCOA)—which bargains the national contract—will break up when the current agreement expires next February if the companies that are still part of that agreement are required to continue paying escalating health care costs.

Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.) has introduced legislation in Congress that would tax the entire coal industry to finance health benefits for the retirees of defunct companies. On March 10 about 1,400 retired coal miners and their families descended on the Capitol to rally and lobby in support of the legislation.

The bill is supported by the BCOA, whose members now bear the entire burden, but opposed by non-union operators. If the legislation is not passed—which seems likely because of a probable veto by President George Bush—the BCOA will likely dissolve when the current contract expires.

That would make the UMWA's fight harder, in part because there would no longer be an employers' group supporting the Rockefeller bill. It would also require the union to negotiate simultaneously with hundreds of individual companies. Maintaining a uniform national contract under those conditions would be difficult in the best of circumstances, even without the fight to preserve retiree health care benefits.

United Steelworkers of America

Ravenswood Lockout in 17th Month

A lockout of 1,700 steelworkers in Ravenswood, W.Va., now heading toward its 17th month, is becoming the next "Pittston" struggle of the American labor movement. The members of United Steelworkers Local 5668 work for Ravenswood Aluminum Corporation (RAC), and were locked out when their contract expired on Oct. 31, 1990.

Despite the long duration of their fight, the steelworkers are sticking together, with only 17 workers having crossed the line to return to work.

Local 5668 is waging a major campaign against the company. The union filed charges with the NLRB, which found that the company did not bargain in good faith. (The case is now before an administrative law judge.)

Members maintain pickets at the plant 24 hours a day. They follow trucks going in and out of the plant to pressure the companies that supply and buy from RAC. They run an observation site to spy on barges that haul ore to the plant.

The local filed OSHA complaints about working conditions, which led to $604,500 fines against RAC. They have convinced Stroh Brewery to boycott RAC aluminum until the dispute is resolved.

The steelworkers' fight to save their union is a fight for all unionists against corporate union busting. For more information, or to send contributions, contact: USWA Local 5668, P.O. Box 56, Ravenswood, W.Va. 26164. Phone (304) 273-9319.

Spread the News!

Order Convoy Dispatch By the Bundle

Convoy Dispatch is a great source of news, and TDU's best recruiter. Help keep other Teamsters informed by ordering a bundle to distribute.

Bundles are sent each issue. Prices per issue:

❑ $3 for 10 ❑ $5 for 20 ❑ $6 for 50 ❑ $10 for 100

Name _____ Local _____

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How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at one of the locations listed below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters concerning Teamster-related issues.

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210. (313) 842-2600.

Washington Office: 2000 P St., N.W., Suite 702, Washington, D.C., 20036. (202) 785-3707.

Western Organizer: Gail Sullivan, 5337 College Ave., Suite 458, Oakland, Calif. 94618 (510) 658-7159.

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Pete Camarata, Detroit Local 299
Dan Campbell, Saginaw, Mich., Local 486
Diana Kilmury, Vancouver, B.C., Local 155
J.C. Thomas, Memphis, Tenn., Local 667

Organizer:
Ken Paff, Detroit

Trustees:
Jackie Jenkins, Memphis, Tenn., Local 891
Patricia McIntosh, Chicago Local 743
Gordy Teller, Seattle Local 741

Members:
Bilal Chaka, Long Beach, Calif., Local 692
Joe Fahey, Watsonville, Calif., Local 921
Neal Henderson, Boston Local 25
Debra McBride-Smith, Charlotte, N.C., Local 71
Big John McClain, Houstont, Texas, Local 988
Michael Rusciano, New York Local 138
Rick Sather, Minneapolis Local 638
Rick Smith, Atlanta Local 728
Candy Workman, Sacramento, Calif., Local 150 spouse

Alternates:
David Dethrow, St. Louis Local 688
Dave Kapitula, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Local 401
J. Anthony Smith, Washington, D.C., Local 639

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 17-member International Steering Committee was elected in October 1990 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 500 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

HEALTH & WELFARE NEWS

Teamsters Hit by Health Care Crisis

Teamsters nationwide are facing cuts to our health insurance benefits. (Canadian Teamsters have the benefit of national health care.) The cuts we face are part of our country's health care crisis, but Teamsters in union health and welfare plans have a special situation.

Active Teamsters have had their benefits substantially cut this year in upstate New York, Maine, Chicago Local 705, St. Louis, and elsewhere. A year ago, Virginia Teamsters had their benefits drastically slashed, and they've been organizing to restore benefits ever since. In most cases, reductions for active Teamsters are on top of cuts to retiree health insurance over the past four to five years.

Teamsters are not alone in facing benefit cuts. Over 80% of the strikes in 1989 were caused in part by disputes over maintaining health insurance benefits, according to union researchers. The spiraling costs of health care and health insurance make national headlines.

Teamsters have their benefits cut by boards of trustees that are half union representatives. The trustees are legally required to act for the best interests of the members, but they're not required to maintain any particular level of benefits. One reason for cuts *may be too-low employer contributions* in a contract, but often that problem isn't seen until well after contract time.

What's happening to Teamsters is what's happening to most U.S. workers: health insurance costs are rising, and employers are refusing or unable to pay.

Why the Benefit Cuts?

Probably each of the Teamster funds that have cut benefits is affected by all of the factors below to some degree.

- ***Increased health care costs.*** This has been a major problem for a decade. Some employers refuse to keep paying for increased health insurance costs to protect huge profits, some simply can't pay and stay in business. But increased health insurance costs are predictable. What have Teamster officials done to keep them from being passed on to the members by stingy employers?
- ***Bargaining.*** This is probably the biggest factor, and the reason why health insurance cuts come as a shock to many Teamsters. Bargaining enough contributions to maintain benefits is tough; rising costs make that a major demand.

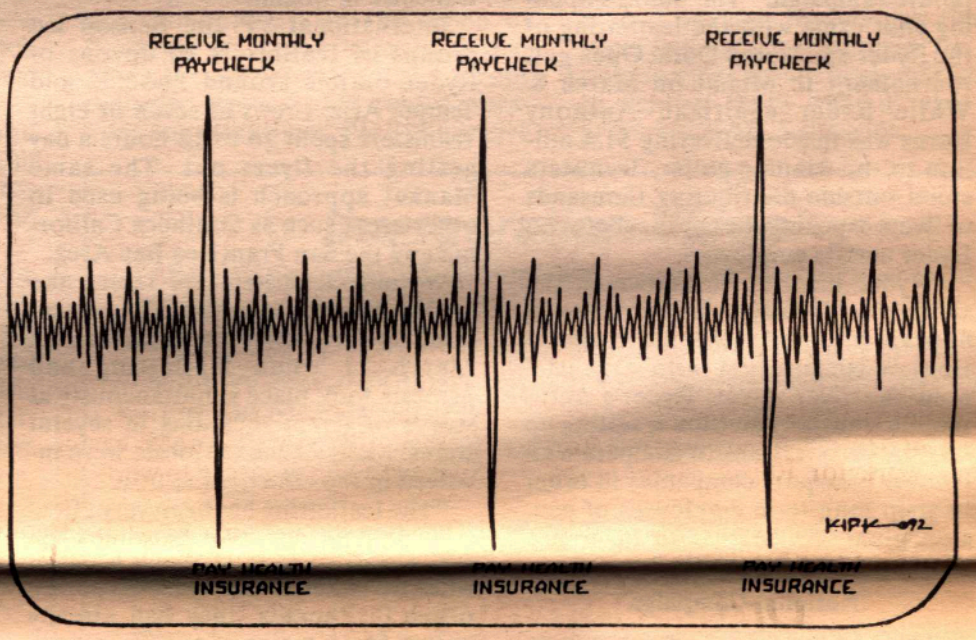
  But some union negotiators hide this fact from the members. They may tell the members, "The health and welfare contributions in this contract will maintain your benefits (for now.)" Then, a few months later, the fund trustees—often the same people as the negotiators—suddenly discover that health care costs have risen substantially for the umpteenth year in a row, and the fund is in trouble.

  National contracts often set the pace for benefit contribution rates, and in the past haven't always provided enough for both pension and health benefits. In the last national contract bargaining, local union leaders in Connecticut stated up front that there was not enough money bargained to maintain benefits. Sure enough, some benefits were cut in that area.
- ***Mismanagement and fraud.*** These are seldom the only cause of health benefit cuts, but they can't be ruled out. Over the years, some Teamster pension and health funds have been used as cash cows for officials' friends and shady "business" associates. Even where they've been cleaned up, the funds were left in a financially weaker state. Often the level of mismanagement is petty and wouldn't be noticed if the fund wasn't having other serious problems. But sloppy management shouldn't be tolerated in this age of the shrinking health care dollar.

What Can Be Done?

Americans need a complete overhaul of our health-care delivery system. But until then, the best medicine for health benefit cuts is prevention: make sure your contract gets enough employer contributions to maintain or increase benefits. Let your union bargainers know that health care is a priority. Ask for (or demand) information on what contributions will be needed to maintain benefits before you and your co-workers decide to accept the contract. For help on organizing for good benefits in your contract, contact the TDU office.

If your benefits get cut between contracts, you at least have a right to full



information about whether it was necessary, and why. Just demanding some answers sometimes puts on enough pressure to minimize the cuts; it can also help the union prepare for the next round of contract bargaining.

You have a legal right to financial reports from the health and welfare fund. A benefit fund's financial report to the Internal Revenue Service is called "Form 5500," for short. Reports for the three to five most recent years can show whether shortfalls were sudden, or developed slowly and could have been foreseen. For help in requesting Form 5500s from your fund, call the TDU office.

The financial reports won't answer all your questions, though. You may need to apply pressure—get lots of members to come to a meeting or sign a petition—to get trustees to answer. If the members are with you, ask (or demand) to know:

- When was it determined that the fund could not maintain benefits on the current contribution rates? And why was that not known sooner?
- What measures were taken to reduce administrative and other costs before benefits were cut?
- Did the trustees talk to members about which cuts would be the easiest to bear, before making a decision?
- Are the officers of the local and the trustees of the health fund taking the same cuts as the members?

Don't plan on restoring benefits by a lawsuit, although you may find that's an option. Laws for health benefit rights are even weaker than for pension rights. If you do attempt a suit, be prepared for a long and expensive fight.

Political Pressure

The quickest and most effective way to address health benefit cuts is by pressuring officials. This requires organization. Passing around informational flyers, bringing concerned members to a local union meeting or to your own meeting, getting petitions signed, getting financial information on the health and welfare fund, raising the issue during election campaigns: these actions let officials know they need to act.

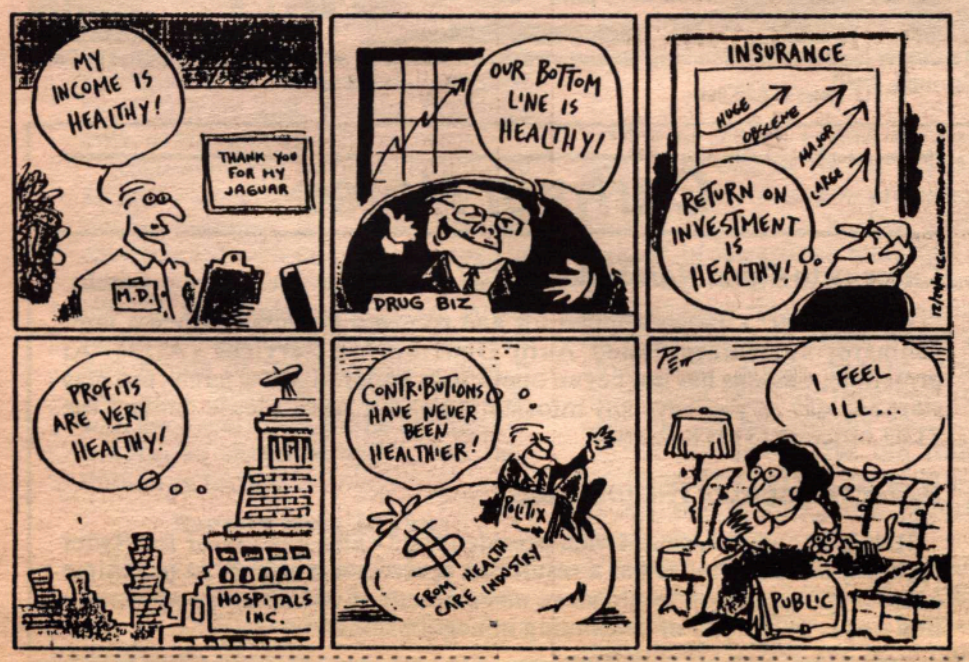
Organizing to pressure officials won't put needed money into the fund. But it will motivate them to look for other ways to cut costs so they can restore benefits. And next contract bargaining, they'll want to make sure employers agree to pay enough to keep benefits healthy, so they won't have to face that heat again.

Long-Term Solutions

The Teamsters would do well to merge health and welfare funds together to reduce administrative costs and make benefit costs more predictable. But such a far-reaching plan requires insightful leadership at the local and regional levels; no health and welfare funds are controlled by the new General Executive Board.

Part of Ron Carey's platform was support for national health insurance. All of labor, and even some corporate leaders, see national health insurance as a must. Our private insurance system is working for fewer and fewer people. If you're facing health benefit cuts, one of your actions should be to write to your congressional representatives about the problem.

For more information on the campaign for national health insurance, contact: Jobs With Justice, c/o Communications Workers of America (CWA), 501 Third St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.



CARHAUL NEWS

Corporate Campaign Attacks Ryder

The union has launched a new strategy for winning a decent contract with the carhaul employers. In addition to mobilizing Teamster members to take on the corporations directly if needed, the IBT is taking the anti-union actions of Ryder Systems—the worst double-breasting offender—to the public. The union is also examining other aspects of Ryder's operations in search of vulnerable pressure points.

This strategy, used by several unions in the past few years, is called a "corporate campaign." The union's opening shot came with the leafletting of the Ryder-sponsored Doral Open golf tournament in Miami on March 8. While Ryder chairman Anthony Burns was inside delivering $1.4 million to the winning golfer, Teamsters stood outside distributing thousands of flyers exposing the conflict between Ryder and its employees.

"Ryder likes to be known in the Greater Miami community as a benevolent, philanthropic corporation—a corporation with a heart," read the flyer. "Yet, Ryder's automobile transport division is setting up dummy corporations to compete with its own transport companies in order to strip long-term employees of pension plans, decent health insurance *coverage and job security.*"

National Campaign

After Miami, the leafletting campaign began spreading nationwide. The next activity came on March 13 when President Ron Carey led more than 100 Teamsters at a Ryder rental agency in Los Angeles. Carey told reporters that Teamsters will distribute flyers to Ryder rental customers across the nation, letting them know about Ryder's cold-hearted attacks on Teamster workers.

The following day, Teamsters leafletted Ryder dealerships and an industry trade show in Palm Springs, Calif. And a few days later, Carey took time out from his vacation to join Teamsters in leafletting a Ryder franchise in Miami.

International VP Jim Benson led groups of leafletters to dozens of Ryder outlets around Phoenix and Tempe, Ariz. Crews of seven or eight Teamsters spent 16 to 18 hours a day getting the flyers out. The same blanket approach is being used in other areas such as Southern California and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Western Teamsters are taking the lead so far in the campaign. They escalated their activity even further on March 21 when leafletting and protests took place simultaneously at scores of Ryder locations in several states. Many Teamster locals were involved in the effort.

"The leafletting has been very effective," said Benson. "We know the message is getting back to Ryder because when we talked to the Ryder corporate office in Phoenix, they had already gotten faxed copies of our flyers from national Ryder headquarters in Miami.

"We're letting Ryder know that this is only the tip of the iceberg. If we can't make progress at the bargaining table, they can expect more of the same, or worse. We have to get this contract settled."

The leafletting campaign hits Ryder where it hurts. Ryder's rental market share has slipped in recent years against its main competitor, U-Haul. Ryder is putting millions of dollars into regaining the business it lost. The last thing it wants is for that investment to go down the drain because of a dispute with the Teamsters.

Crime Connection

Along with the leafletting campaign, the International union is publicizing Ryder's connection to organized crime through its sweetheart contract between QAT and independent Chicago Local 707. Local 707 is led by Joseph Senese. His father, Dominic, was removed as president of Teamsters Local 703 for being a member of the Chicago mob.

Subsequently, Joseph Senese and three trustees of Local 707 were forced by the Department of Labor to repay $140,000 to the union's insurance trust because of alleged mismanagement. In February 1992, the NLRB found the Senese family guilty of trying to transfer the members and assets of Teamsters Local 703 to independent Local 707.

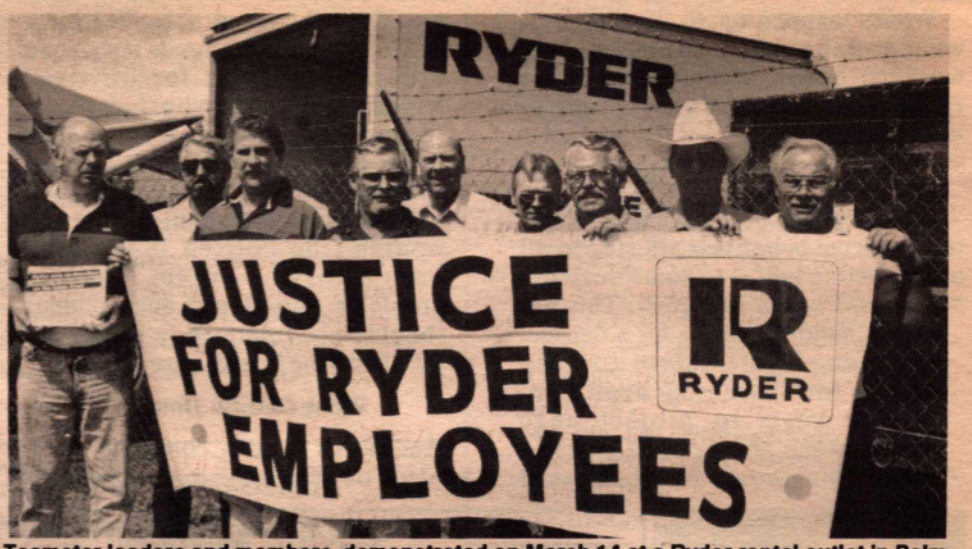
Equipment Safety

The International is investigating Ryder's equipment safety record. In its most recent contract bulletin, the union charges that "the same management recklessness that leads to attacks on our jobs, pensions, and health care benefits also leads companies to not replace old trucks or to use inexperienced personnel. We intend to show the public and government officials that reckless management is a threat not only to workers' rights but to public safety."

Rank and File Support Is Key

The Carey administration is breaking new ground in the carhaul campaign, but they can't do it alone. Just like the grass-roots effort that got the Carey slate elected, the rank and file have to take the ball and run with it. Don't wait to be asked to help.

Some locals are doing a good job in mobilizing members to leaflet Ryder outlets. Call up your local union and ask them what they have planned. If your local isn't doing anything, organize leafletting yourself (see "Adopt-a-Dealer.") Call the carhaul office at the IBT headquarters (202) 624-8954. Ask the staff to send you a list of Ryder locations in your area, *and some flyers to hand out. Get a* group of Teamster activists together and hit the streets!



Teamster leaders and members demonstrated on March 14 at a Ryder rental outlet in Palm Springs, Calif.

Adopt-a-Dealer!

The IBT is asking Teamsters across the country to "Adopt-a-Dealer" and help out in the fight against Ryder's demands for concessions. Pick a Ryder rental outlet, preferably a franchise that rents Ryder equipment as part of its overall business instead of a large Ryder-owned operation. The reason is that the franchises are in a stronger position to tell Ryder to settle the conflict or else they will switch to U-Haul.

Get volunteers. Hit as many places in your area as you can. Focus your leafletting on Saturday mornings, when most equipment rental business happens. Make sure you tell the franchise owners that your dispute is not with them, but with Ryder. Ask them to call Ryder and complain.

You don't have to be a carhauler to do this. That's what solidarity is all about!

Carey Speaks to Detroit Carhaulers

Dennis Wade
Local 299, E&L
Detroit

President Ron Carey spoke at our Local 299 carhaul craft meeting on March 9. Over 300 rank and file carhaulers came out to hear him. It was the first time an International president has come and spoken to the rank and file about the contract. Carey is taking the lead in negotiations, but he is also relating to the rank and file. He spoke out against double breasting, two-tier and concessionary contracts.

The membership gave him a standing ovation. Most members were happy just to have him there. In the past the leadership always kept us in the dark about the contract. Carey is different.

During the question-and-answer period, members spoke from the floor about the need to stop double breasting, and the right to strike on grievances. When asked whether they were willing to strike over these issues, the vast majority of members present raised their hands to say, "Yes."

If we don't win the right to strike on grievances, our contract will continue to be eroded because the grievance machinery doesn't work for the members.

We have to be willing to sacrifice to make gains. If we stay united on this fight we can win.

Carhaul Notes

Cassens to Open Non-Union ADS?

In early 1992 Cassens applied for and received permits to open a non-Teamster subsidiary called Auto Distribution Services (ADS). At presstime, Cassens has not begun operations under this new name, but may start any day. If you have any information about ADS, please contact the TDU office at (313) 842-2600.

Ryder Negotiator Hospitalized.

Ralph Thompson, senior vice president and chief negotiator for Ryder Systems, was hospitalized as a result of a severe heart attack. At presstime a Ryder spokesperson would make no comment on Mr. Thompson's condition or his likelihood of continuing in negotiations.

UNITED PARCEL SERVICE

Is UPS's 'Corporate Mission' Ours?

Anthony Smith
Local 639, UPS
Springfield, Va.

UPS recently held required attendance classes for employees titled "Delivering Our Future." This program was supposedly a chance to discuss the future direction of the corporation and our part in that "team" effort. The classes were in reality a response to our newly elected IBT leadership and part of a continuing and not-so-subtle effort to prepare us to accept less than our fair share in the August 1993 contract negotiations. UPS stressed three main areas: sales and service, falling package volume, and competition.

The Service Lie

The sales and service portion stressed that we should continue to provide the quality service that we've always provided—and a little more—in this era of "increased competition." Spend the extra time to pick up those packages that aren't quite ready. Take a minute to explain our service to those who are shipping with our competitors. ... Management does not, however, address the service lie. How are we to fit this extra service and sales into already overly restrictive time standards?

UPS also fails to mention that it has shut millions of Americans out of a choice of service by raising the residential ground rates some 30% and throwing a portion of it to the U.S. Postal Service because it isn't profitable enough. I guess service takes a back seat to greed.

The Myth of Competition

Through "Delivering Our Future" UPS continues to hammer on a favorite theme that we are losing volume to the competition. The facts are that despite giving ground volume away, UPS's preliminary reports showed a volume gain for 1991—a record revenue of some $15 billion and net profits (after taxes) of some $700 million.

UPS achieved this volume and revenue during the longest recession since World War II, a recession that has affected every sector of the economy.

UPS likes to portray its competitors as having non-union, low wage, highly flexible workforces. The truth is that the postal service is fully unionized and Airborne and RPS are partially unionized. The Teamster national Airborne contract provides all employees $16-$17 per hour—no $8 or $9 part-timers. Also, the Airborne contract provides a maximum of 20% of future hires to be part-timers.

Where wages and benefits are lower than at UPS or where there is no union protecting employees' rights, employees tend to be less productive and less willing to go the extra mile for the employer. The service of UPS's competitors has suffered a perennial also-ran status because of this.

A Union Response

UPS should beware that its short-sighted quest for mega-profits may lead it down the same path to mediocrity. We should make it clear to the corporation that we will not throw out our contract in the name of flexibility to meet competition that does not exist. We will not give up our seniority rights to bid routes, vacations and start times. We will not give up our daily guarantee, our health and pension benefits, or anything else that union members before us fought so hard to win.

UPS knows that our new Teamster leadership will not be intimidated into accepting a contract the members do not want. They will not perform a disappearing act as the McCarthy crowd did in 1990 as UPS hammered the membership.

Now that the rank and file have permanently disappeared the old, unimaginative, corrupt leadership through our vote, we must rally around our new leaders. It's time to stand in solidarity and show the corporation that we are ready and willing to fight, if that's what it takes. No prisoners in '93. Solidarity.

Inauguration Video

The Arizona chapter of TDU has prepared a one-hour video of the inauguration ceremonies. Included are the swearing in of Ron Carey and the new GEB, Carey's inauguration speech, interviews with members and vice presidents and the reception in the Marble Palace.

Cost of the video is $20 plus $3 shipping (more for special shipping).

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Arizona TDU
9043 N. 36 Drive, Phoenix, Ariz. 85051

Change Comes to UPS National Committee

When the UPS side of the national grievance committee came to the quarterly hearings in February, they witnessed what must have been a shocking development—the formation of a strong union side of the committee!

Vice President Mario Perrucci, the IBT's new director of the parcel and small package division, wasted no time in starting to reorganize at UPS. Between inauguration and the committee hearings, he removed several long-time officials on the committee and appointed new leaders, including local officers and, for the first-time ever, some rank and file members.

Remember the National Safety and Health Committee that was put into our last contract? At the time it was an easy way for UPS to get issues such as diesel exhaust and package car venting off the bargaining table and into a bogus committee. Not anymore. The union side of the committee now is pursuing these important issues as well as concerns about the handling of hazardous chemical spills, and random drug testing.

Random Drug Testing

The union has at least two major concerns about UPS's implementation of DOT-mandated random drug testing, and wants:

- Safeguards that certify the random selection process. Drivers must be protected against being targeted for "random" drug testing when they haven't actually been randomly selected. (The DOT recently ruled that random drug testing shall be paid-for time.)
- Safeguards on urine collection sites and chain of possession of the urine samples. Ordinarily urine samples are collected at hospitals and clinics. UPS has been collecting samples directly at some centers.

OSHA Fines UPS

UPS in March agreed to a settlement with OSHA to pay a $555,900 fine and implement new procedures to protect employees against spills or leakage of hazardous materials at its 1,500 U.S. facilities. UPS is to develop an emergency response plan and training program. The union wants to assure that only highly trained employees will be involved in the cleanup of hazardous spills. The OSHA settlement was the result of citations filed in 1990 for violations at its Uniondale, N.Y., and Watertown, Conn., facilities.

Perrucci has called for a meeting of local officials on March 30 in Chicago to explain the OSHA settlement and the role of the IBT and local unions.

UPS & Downs

NLRB Slaps UPS's Hands, Again.

UPS knows the NLRB is a limp protector of workers' rights and it knows that if management are well-trained, they can commit unfair labor practices (ULPs) and get away with it. Both TDU and the IBT filed ULPs against UPS during the 1990 contract. TDU filed national charges (as it did in 1987) based on a corporatewide pattern of harassment, and again (as in 1987) the NLRB divided up the charges and allowed for informal settlement agreements at centers in the Tampa, Winston-Salem and Detroit districts.

The NLRB also called for an informal settlement in Baltimore, but TDU attorneys filed objections on the grounds that UPS has repeatedly violated the NLRA, and that the 60-day "Notice to Employees" in the informal settlements are posted between contract negotiations when they have impact on neither the past nor future negotiations. TDU sought a formal settlement agreement providing for a consent order enforceable in court.

On Feb. 28 the NLRB responded, " ... where as here, there has been no formal finding that the Employer has committed prior unfair labor practices at the involved locations, a formal settlement is not warranted."

Nepotism Gone Wild in Kansas.

Bill "Let's Make a Deal" Moore publicly announced that he will oppose his dad for the principal office of Teamster Local 696 in Topeka, Kan. As business agent for the 2,000-member local, Bill has long-been regarded as the best friend of UPS in the entire Kansas district. After a brief stint as Central Conference small package director, Bill's lust for power has no doubt overwhelmed him. As heir-apparent to the throne, he can't seem to wait for dad, LaRue Moore, to do what comes naturally. Bill, here's hoping that you and dad neutralize each other and real Teamster leadership emerges in Local 696.

—Michael Savwoir, Local 41 feeder driver, Kansas City, Mo.

THE NEW TEAMSTERS UNION

Central Conference

Old Guard Holds Anti-Carey Gathering

Jack Yager, the chair of the Central Conference policy committee, called a meeting of local officials in the Central Conference on March 18 in Chicago that was in effect a Carey-bashing rally of the old guard. Yager orchestrated and the Michigan officials under Joint Council 43 president Larry Brennan were among the most enthused at denouncing any change in the IBT. Ron Carey attended, as did several new vice presidents, and responded to the two-hour attack.

Among the comments and bogus charges voiced from various officials:

- *TDU members are organizing against them in local elections.* (Only the members of a local union can vote out a local officer, and if you do your job, you probably won't get voted out.)
- *The IBT staff is not unionized.* (Apparently this didn't bother the old guard for 88 years, but now suddenly they are hot and bothered.)
- *Resolutions passed by the new IBT General Executive Board in early February will interfere in local affairs.* (The resolutions are just a small start on implementing the Carey platform, not interfering in locals. These resolutions set up mechanisms to review IBT functioning in such areas as ethical practices, budget and finances, and staffing.)
- *New people are being put on national grievance panels and into other positions.* (Of course! That is a major part of the Carey platform.)
- *New vice presidents are speaking out on the issues and criticizing old guard officials, and will oppose old guard officials in local elections.* (Carey responded that he will not be campaigning for or against incumbent local officials.)
- *Nepotism produces good leadership.* (We've heard that before.)

It was the same old attacks, TDU-bashing and also Carey-bashing. They haven't realized that we had an election, and they lost it. That's how International VPs who were there summed it up.

Carey's Positive Response

Carey responded by talking about new plans and programs, and addressing specific questions or complaints. While some officials said they had no problem with TDU or with Carey, many of the officials present didn't come to listen. They came to rally under Yager, Brennan, Sansone and others defeated in the recent election, and to try to protect their own power and wealth.

With this rally, Yager is openly challenging the Carey administration, to preserve the old ways and undermine any decisive new direction. The response from the new IBT leadership will be important.

From the Anti-Carey Grapevine

The old guard is continuing the campaign against Carey and the new IBT leadership. While the attacks and rumors are too numerous to detail, a few of the big attacks include:

- *Ron Carey is bringing in inexperienced people, and outsiders.* This of course is a continuation of the campaign, when the Durham old guard said they had experience. The members rejected that experience, and of course new people are being brought on board! This is what the election was all about. As for "outsiders," the objection here is that the new leaders are willing and able to hire some experienced, talented people from other unions. Tapping the best in the labor movement, who want to work for the new IBT, is a great opportunity and deserves our support.
- *Ron Carey is upsetting the employers.* This comes out in various ways. You may hear that *Carey has rejected deals already made in carhaul bargaining.* Of course, because those deals were rejected by the members. Or that, *Carey isn't going to let Yellow Teamsters vote on the short haul contract.* This is the corporation putting words in officials' mouths who support concessions. A union shouldn't let management dictate when and if votes are taken of members. Once again, the old guard are upset that any changes are being made, or might be made. They want business as usual and want to pressure the new IBT leadership to go that way.
- You may also hear renewed attacks on TDU. They want to separate the new IBT leadership from the active members that propelled the election campaign, and TDU is a major part of that.

Employers' Involvement

The employers have not for the most part attacked the new leadership openly. But signs are pointing in that direction. A number of employer publications have printed warnings about a stronger IBT, if new directions are carried forward.

One seminar held for employers is interesting. The title of this management class is "The IBT's New President: What does his election mean to employers? What should you do to prepare?"

The old guard and the employers have a mission, and that mission is to water down and cool off the program of the new IBT. To cause it to be business-as-usual with a cleaner image. That's what's behind the criticisms.

Carey will be under increasing pressure both from employers and mid-level union officials who will be snapping at his heels at every turn. His natural allies do not work in fancy offices or collect multiple salaries. Carey's allies are the rank and file. Only with their active support will he be able to withstand these relentless attacks.

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Make plans now to attend our most important event of the year!

VP Jim Benson

IBT Cleanup, Corporate Campaigns Fill Agenda

*Jim Benson is a newly elected International vice president at large. He is a member of the executive board of Phoenix Local 104 and formerly a warehouse worker at Fleming Foods. **Convoy Dispatch** asked Jim to comment about his first six weeks as a VP.*

It's been busy. In addition to trying to streamline the operations of the International we have spent a lot of time trying to clean up the mess we inherited from the old guard. It's incredible. They've been running this multi-million dollar operation for years with absolutely no accountability.

We've been studying and analyzing the operation so we can make the necessary changes. It's a big bureaucracy and a big job trying to straighten it out. But we are making progress.

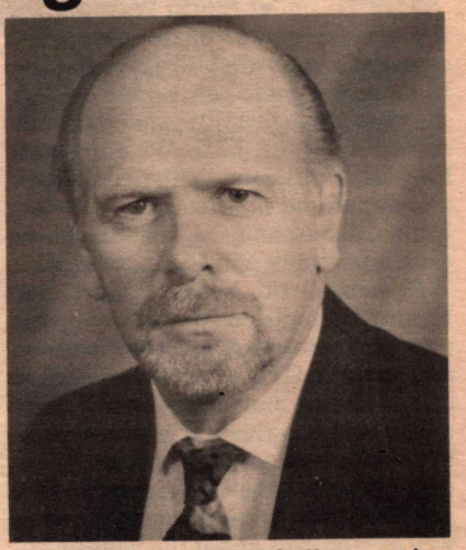
Immediately upon assuming office we were confronted with a major crisis. The Northwest flight attendants were threatening to leave the Teamsters and join the Association of Flight Attendants. The AFA already had 70% of the flight attendants sign authorization cards and we were facing an election to switch unions.

Nobody gave the Teamsters much of a chance given the level of dissatisfaction that had developed over the years. But President Carey personally intervened and campaigned among flight attendants from airport to airport. He promised the flight attendants their own nationwide local—such a resolution was adopted by the General Executive Board at our first quarterly meeting—and made a compelling argument that the New Teamsters would serve their membership well. The promise of a new, clean, democratic union paid off and the flight attendants voted to remain in the Teamsters by a 2-1 margin.

Also, last week, I had the honor of being part of the campaign at Nestle-Carnation in Bakersfield, Calif., which culminated in a Teamster win (see page 10). With a lot of hard work from Ken Mee, Ward Allen, Nobby Miller, Jack Cox, myself and many others, we were able to turn around what was a dire situation. Again, it was the active intervention of Ron Carey who came to Bakersfield to personally leaflet the employees and address a mass meeting on the eve of the vote that made the difference between victory and defeat.

Corporate Campaign Against Ryder

Most of my time recently has been devoted to building a corporate campaign against Ryder Truck Rental Systems. Carhaulers have been working without a contract since last June and Ryder is the major corporate culprit. Carey kicked off our campaign against Ryder on March 13 in order to pressure them to adopt a reasonable attitude at the bargaining table. We went to Palm Springs, Calif., to demonstrate at a dealers' leasing convention. We are now on a nationwide campaign to go to as many Ryder dealers as possible to get our message out.



We need the help of all our union brothers and sisters in this effort and ask you and your families to not rent from Ryder affiliates.

Much is to be done, but we are working hard to do what the membership elected us to do. We need your continued help and support.

TDU ON THE MOVE

TDU Chapters Tackle Local Bylaws Reform

Elected Stewards Won in New Mexico

The New Mexico Chapter of TDU (statewide Local 492) is on a roll. Since late 1990 with the election of Bob McDonald as recording secretary of the local, members have been victorious in every major endeavor.

They swept the delegate elections. They campaigned for Ron Carey, who won New Mexico by a 5-1 margin. Recently they were successful in amending the local's bylaws to have elected stewards, despite stiff resistance from the incumbent local leadership.

At the January monthly meeting three Local 492 members (now all members of TDU) made separate proposals to amend the bylaws in favor of elected stewards. The local leadership then tried to sow confusion by playing the proposals off against each other.

With the help of the local TDU chapter the three members came together—two withdrew their proposals and they put their united strength behind one common proposal at the February meeting.

The March meeting was the payoff, when the actual voting took place. Activists, especially from UPS, ABF, Yellow and Roadway, distributed flyers throughout the local, mobilizing members to attend the meeting and support this popular issue.

The meeting was attended by five times the number of members who usually go to meetings. After an hour-long debate, the membership passed the motion by nearly a 3-1 margin.

The new bylaw calls for mandatory elections of all stewards at least once every three years, a ratio of at least one steward for every 40 employees, and the local to pay the stewards' union dues. Members attending the meeting were supportive of current stewards; they simply wanted to have democratic control over who their stewards would be. According to Yellow Freight line driver Mike James, "The stewards are the backbone of the union and we've got a lot of good stewards here. Being accountable to the rank and file will make them even better stewards."

Stewards Council

The membership also managed to pass a bylaw amendment, this time without significant opposition, instituting a stewards council. The stewards council is to encompass all stewards of the local, meet monthly to discuss grievances and problems, make recommendations to the executive board, develop educational programs for shop stewards, and elect four of its members to meet and work with the secretary-treasurer on the resolution of shop floor problems.

Buoyed by this string of recent victories the New Mexico chapter is now embarking upon a program of expanding its steering committee to bring in new activists, regularizing its meetings, and starting a new membership recruitment drive.

Nearly 80 Teamsters attended a TDU meeting in Janesville, Wis., on March 15—most of them Local 579 carhaulers wanting to talk about negotiations.

Kalamazoo Members Get Involved

In Kalamazoo, Mich., Local 7 bylaw amendments submitted by rank and file activists were defeated by the incumbent officers: annual elections of stewards and a stewards council, open review of all financial documents and minutes of executive board meetings available to all members, and establishment of an election committee.

The amendments were defeated 125 to 87. Spirits are high however in spite of the defeat. Members were excited that over 250 members showed up at the hall. "Never before has there been that many people show up at a union meeting in Local 7," said Dave Pallet, a feeder driver for UPS and a supporter of the bylaw amendments. "They turned out more people than we did, many of which did not know what they were voting on. Our opposition was able to cloud the issues and confuse our members. This is our first campaign for bylaw reform and the great thing about it is we exposed our local officers and their opposition to democratic principles. We also get to try again in 12 months!"

Jacksonville Bylaws Vote April 18

Members in Jacksonville, Fla., Local 512 have submitted a package of five amendments to reform the local's bylaws: changing the principal officer from secretary-treasurer to president, to better balance the power; electing stewards and paying their dues; giving membership approval on some executive board powers, such as setting officer salaries and benefits; limiting officers' severance pay; and allowing for a simple majority vote on bylaws amendments. Now bylaws amendments require two-thirds approval, which means hundreds of reform-minded Teamsters need to show up at the union meeting on April 18 to vote their support.

Kapitula Retains TDU Recruitment Title—Barely

Dave Kapitula, a long-time TDU builder and leader of the Wilkes-Barre, Pa., chapter, was recognized as the top recruiter during TDU's "Victory Month" in February. But five other recruiters were within one of Kapitula's number, and dozens of others made a good showing.

Victory Month was planned by the TDU International Steering Committee (ISC) to give members a chance to celebrate our victory in the election of the Ron Carey Slate, and to inspire TDU members and allies to keep building TDU. The ISC wanted to tell everyone who was involved in the Carey campaign that there is a lot left to do, and that the new General Executive Board needs an organized, active rank and file group like TDU to help rebuild the union.

TDU members got the message! TDU recruitment was at near-record levels in February and March, and most of that was because members took the time to talk to other Teamsters about joining TDU.

Kapitula was recognized as TDU's top recruiter in 1991. But even though he's kept up his good recruitment, he'll be challenged to maintain a lead this year. TDU members from Bakersfield, Calif., to New York City and from Indianapolis to Memphis and beyond are stepping up their recruitment work.

"I'm still recruiting hard," said Kapitula. "It's part of what I do for the rank and file every month. But this is one prize I'd like to see somebody else win next year. Not that I'll make it easy for them!"

TDU leaders commend the dedication and strength of members like Dave Kapitula, and the hundreds like him across the continent.

L.A. TDUers Ready to Finish Job

Jerry Moerler
Local 63, Von's
Los Angeles

Our Southern California chapter has come alive this year. With Carey's victory and the end of the campaign, we diverted a lot of that energy and our new contacts into TDU. Teamsters want to know what's happening, and they are looking to us. Rather than thinking the war is over, more and more want to get involved and finish reforming our union.

We kicked off the new year with a victory party, and we're still riding high. At our March 1 meeting, International VP Diana Kilmury was just one of our honored guests. Others included TDU co-chair Pete Camarata, TDU West Coast organizer Gail Sullivan, and several local officers. Diana, speaking powerfully as always, gave us the rundown on the "New Teamsters," then signed up eight new members on the spot.

Part of our success is due to our new organizing plans. We learned a lot from the Carey campaign. Our steering committee was doubled to 10 in March. The goal is to get each member actively involved, participating, learning, speaking and teaching, with responsibilities and assignments. These are some of the future Teamster leaders developing their skills.

One new committee we are forming will do phone banking for meetings, rallies or whatever. We think meeting attendance will increase by personal invitation. Another committee will work on a simple newsletter to go out with meeting notices. This will keep our members up to date, and give others a better understanding of TDU and more reasons to come to our meetings.

We're staying active in local issues. We want to encourage members to attend their local meetings. Support for strikers, rallies and corporate campaigns can be organized. Our new treasurer, Sally Smith, made the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* business section last week by showing up to videotape a Carey rally at Ryder.

Things do look up, but remember, the old guard is still out there, and those who won't reform must be replaced. High on our list is helping local officer candidates in every way possible. We can help by giving them a chance to be leaders, speakers and teachers in our group. Educational materials and advice from organizers and friendly officers will keep campaigns on track.

So that's our story. Let's hear from some other chapters!

New Teamsters Union to Management:

'Does Yellow Want a Regional Rider ... Or a New Contract?'

Something new is happening in the freight industry: the IBT leadership is standing up to a demand for concessions, and is informing the membership directly. And Yellow Freight is not happy about the change.

On March 16, Yellow's top management, George Powell and Leo Suggs, met with Ron Carey, and International VPs Dennis Skelton, Sam Theodus and Doug Mims, along with a number of other freight Teamster officials. Yellow presented them with a 22-page proposal for concessions, in conjunction with starting up a network of regional carriers. A look at these proposals shows why the IBT leaders say that they "would have a devastating effect not only on our members at YFS, but also on all members working in the freight industry."

Yellow's Proposals

1. Replace Article 36 of the contract with the 70%-80%-90%-100% wage scale, applicable to all Yellow employees. This would allow Yellow to hire thousands of employees at about $11.50 per hour for the first year, $13 their second year, and by then the contract would be over, in 1994. Management also offered the union another choice (pick a concession!), in which the bottom 20% of all seniority lists would always be paid 80% of union scale.

2. Road drivers required to work the dock (and drop and hook), at end-of-line (non break bulk) terminals (to eliminate jobs).

3. Four-hour casuals at end-of-line terminals (to eliminate more jobs).

4. Yellow would not assume the contract of any carriers they acquire, and would not be required to dovetail their employees either.

5. Yellow would offer a 401(k) plan for employees (a no-cost "sweetener").

As you can see, these would gut the master contract and be an open door for all other competing NMFA carriers to ask the union for the same concessions.

Keep in mind these concessions would apply to all YFS employees, not just those in regional operations.

New IBT Response

Within days the new Teamster leadership responded not only to management, but mailed to all 20,000 Yellow Freight Teamsters a four-page bulletin explaining Yellow's proposals and the dangers in them. The "Yellow Freight Regional Update" has already excited those stewards and active members concerned about management's steady barrage of propaganda to soften up the members.

This is a good start in putting the members back into the union in the freight industry, and hopefully will be followed up with much more membership involvement.

Management continues to work on the employees, stewards and local union officials with propaganda. The corporate program includes videos, regular reports to employees, and also quarterly meetings with selected stewards invited to become part of the "team." The invitation for management's Barstow, Calif., regional meeting on March 25 noted that "dress will be very casual" so stewards can rub elbows with management in a really nice atmosphere.

And of course the threats continue as well as the "team" baloney. That's the other side of undermining union strength. Yellow's timetable calls for two regional operations by December 31, 1992, and the threat is that they will open them non-union if they don't

continued on page 9

Railing at CF—What to Do About It

Jack Widmer
CF Steward, Local 24
Richfield, Ohio

We've been enforcing the railing language here in Richfield, Ohio, and the results have been very beneficial to drivers from Ohio to Nashville. You can get involved to make sure CF isn't running rails over the top of drivers in your area.

The union stewards at CF in Local 24 have won well over $100,000 in rail and broker runarounds since 1989. We have a form that we use which has the time, date, rail trailer number and its destination on it; it also includes the extra board driver's name who was run around, the time he was available, the date, when he was dispatched, and how much claim he has coming. The stewards find this info on the sign-in and sign-out sheets and the dispatch cards, which show where a driver came in, when he was called out, and his status: short hours, booked off, marked for a turn only, vacation, etc.

After we research the runarounds and enter them on the form, we file one pilot grievance, attach all the other runarounds on the forms to it, and have the road supervisor sign it. He then checks them out on the company's behalf. It is discussed between the company and local union at the grievance meeting and then they are paid by the company in about four weeks.

The rail trailers that leave Richfield are filed on by the union stewards on behalf of the extra board drivers at the end of the 30-day period in which they departed. January is filed around the last week of February, and so on each month. We file on behalf of the extra board because they are the ones who usually lay in the longest and receive the most in a runaround claim, although any bid drivers have the right to file and have first claim on any rail that moved over their bid lanes. If they don't file, the extra board gets it by default.

The stewards here have formed a line of communication with stewards in other locals to inform them of overhead rails coming over their lane of traffic: Indianapolis, Peru, Ill., Nashville, Pocono, Pa., and others. Our BA sends a FAX to all locals in all directions from the Richfield terminal who might be able to file on the overhead rails. However, some local officers are not passing this info on to the stewards in their area to file on. Some officials have even told us, "Mind your own business." That is why stewards here now send the information directly to the stewards in other locations, bypassing local officials who won't act.

A rail trailer that is "dirty" at Richfield is dirty all the way to its destination and can be filed on by any other local it goes over, but only if they are aware of it. It is our duty as union members, stewards, BAs and officers to enforce this language.

Freight Lines

Showdown at OK Corral.

The IBT on March 10 requested locals to conduct strike votes among employees of "OK Freightways/Wintz Parcel Drivers Inc." OK Freightways is a successor to NMFA signator OK Trucking, which was purchased by George Wintz in December. Wintz has been refusing to bargain with the union or pay pension and H&W contributions on behalf of the former OK Trucking employees. Wintz also recently bought out Century Trucking under similar circumstances.

At presstime the overall vote counts were not known but considerable support for a strike was shown by Teamsters at Cleveland Local 407, Louisville Local 89 and Fort Wayne Local 414, which all voted 100% to strike. Indianapolis fell short of 100% support by one vote. Minneapolis Local 544 voted against a strike.

In Louisville, 15 city drivers were fired by Wintz for alleged "blue flu." Four were later returned to work but the other 11 have been replaced by non-union drivers. "It was sheer insanity for terminal manager James Stoner to assume blue flu," said steward Ron Minter, one of the fired drivers. "Wintz is actively seeking to bust the union and our International needs to fight back hard."

Why Drivers Violate Hours-of-Service Rules.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) conducted a survey of long-haul tractor trailer drivers to estimate what proportion of drivers regularly violate the DOT hours-of-service rules. The survey found that about 70% of the drivers reported working over the weekly maximum at least once in the previous month. The survey concluded that "economic factors are a major impetus for violating hours-of-service rules. Among these economic factors are tight delivery schedules and being paid 30 cents or less per mile." Some 75% of the drivers polled were paid less than 30 cents per mile, and over half of them made less than 24 cents per mile! The IIHS report recommended that changes in the law are needed to put a greater emphasis on carrier accountability. A copy of the report is available from TDU. Free to TDU members, others please include a donation.

Maintenance of Standards Committee?

Carolina Freight in New Jersey Local 560 lost some long-established conditions at the January Eastern Conference "Maintenance of Standards Committee." Not surprisingly, Carolina is now demanding takeaway's from New York City Local 707. The main change at Local 560 was reduction of coffee breaks from 15 to 10 minutes. Also, Carolina employees used to be able to take vacation a day at a time. This is now restricted to the fourth and fifth weeks, which means only a few, most senior employees will get this right. Just last year Carolina had an opening to negotiate over these conditions, but waited until a committee could give concessions behind closed doors.

Members covered by the New York-New Jersey freight supplement also are wondering where their contract books are, since they are printed and available in most areas.

GROCERY NEWS

Purity Teamsters Fight to Save Jobs

Joe Day
Local 445
Carver, Mass.

The New Teamsters union is on a roll in New England. President Ron Carey on March 1 led about 1,500 Teamsters on a 1.5-mile march to a rally in Billerica, Mass., in support of over 500 Purity Supreme Teamsters who are facing layoff on March 28 when their distribution center shuts down. The closing is the result of a company buyout by Freeman Spogli & Co., a Los Angeles investment company that buys and sells companies in search of a quick profit.

When Freeman-Spogli bought the Purity grocery chain in mid-December, it promised the workers and their union, Local 829, that it would make no changes in jobs or the company. Then, two days after Christmas, Freeman-Spogli announced it would be closing the Billerica distribution center at the end of March. And the company intended to service the 63 Purity stores using C&S Wholesale Grocers from Brattleboro, Vt. C&S is a non-union outfit that left Worcester, Mass., in 1981 to escape a contract it had with Local 170.

Freeman-Spogli has already cut the full-time Purity store employees to 32 hours per week and fired hundreds of office staff. It refuses to consider any offers from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to save the area from economic disaster. Purity's plan is to subcontract to the Vermont non-union firm, and make people so desperate for a job that it can come back later with part-time minimum wage jobs in the warehouse, and sub-standard jobs in trucking.

The first thing Local 829 Secretary-Treasurer Dan McLaughlin did was put Purity shop steward Hank Perron in control of handbilling in front of the stores. At first, the informational pickets were met with the expected public skepticism toward unionists. But once people read the flyers, their attitudes began to change. The Massachusetts and New Hampshire region has been rocked by layoffs after layoffs. There isn't a shopper in the area that doesn't know someone who has lost their jobs to the predatory corporate money-grubbing that Freeman-Spogli represents.

With the help of Colum Flaherty, a Local 82 member, rank and filers have organized a phone bank to let consumers know what's going on. Phoners have targeted one of the most profitable Purity stores, and have called every phone number in the surrounding area. Within two weeks, that store reported a 47% drop in sales.

As a result of the union campaign, in particular the hard work of Local 829 business agent Arthur Lazazzero, the company has agreed to return to the bargaining table. The Purity Teamsters are fighting hard to save their jobs. And they're getting support from their union to do it. That's what the New Teamsters union is all about.

Union Calls Boycott at Safeway

More than 400 irate Teamsters, Machinists and community supporters in Oakland, Calif., on March 19 occupied the streets alongside corporate headquarters to kick off a boycott of Safeway stores. The boycott is intended to pressure the supermarket chain to drop its union-busting strategy and allow all 800 union workers to follow their jobs to a giant new $100 million distribution center near Tracy.

From atop a pickup truck, officials and rank and filers fervently denounced the Safeway scheme. New Teamster Vice President Ken Mee promised support and reminded the rally of the need to oppose the so-called "free trade" attack on their wages and job security.

Joint Council 7 President Chuck Mack said that the Safeway boycott resulted from more than a narrow labor-management dispute and that the community has a stake in forcing Safeway to stop being what the Plant Closure Project's Ed Morris called a "bad neighbor." However, Safeway rep Louie Gonzalez wrote to unionists last August that "our guiding principle is competitive parity, not some abstract notion of what constitutes decent living standards."

Details of the boycott were not made clear, but apparently boycott leafletting will be limited to weekends at just 35 of Safeway's 220 Northern California locations.

There have been public reports that the Stop Safeway Coalition has begun asking public employee pension funds to withdraw investments in Safeway.

A Teamster contract with Safeway expires April 30, bringing near a decision by truck drivers and warehouse workers on whether to strike. At stake is the Northern California grocery wage and job protection for thousands of union members and their families.

Fore Seasons to Merge Into Fore Way

The Central Conference change of operations committee on March 10 approved a proposal by Fore Way Express to merge its Fore Seasons division back into Fore Way. The Fore Seasons drivers, who worked under the NMFA Central States Iron and Steel and Truckload Supplement, are being brought back to Fore Way as over-the-road drivers, where they will come under the standard Master Freight Agreement.

The change of operations request from Fore Way came after Fore Seasons drivers rejected a company contract proposal by a vote of 74 to 3. The contract offer included little improvement over their previous contract, which was far below NMFA standards.

By coming up to the Master Freight rates, several ex-Fore Seasons drivers will get a big boost in income, jumping from around 29 cents per mile to over 40 cents. However, not everyone is happy with the change. Many ex-Fore Seasons drivers will be forced to redomicile. Owner-operators, who represent a large chunk of the ex-Fore Seasons drivers, will have to give up their trucks by leasing them to Fore Way. There are also complaints about the way the seniority lists from Fore Way and Fore Seasons will be merged.

Under the change of operations agreement, a separate over-the-road board will be maintained for the former Fore Seasons drivers. Ex-Fore Seasons drivers who bid into a location with a combined city and road board will be protected in road positions. The biggest change will occur in Chicago, where 24 new road drivers will be added.

"I feel that the Fore Seasons drivers should be dovetailed into our boards with their company seniority," said Fore Way Express driver Ken Scheuer of Appleton, Wis., Local 563. "That way they would have the option to get on and off the road as they choose, and our city drivers who have been waiting as much as 20 years to get on the road would have the opportunity to do so."

Yellow Freight

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get concessions.

Our union is not powerless, if the members and leadership unite to meet the challenge. The new IBT leadership has made a good start to tap that power.

NOTE: All freight Teamsters may want to see Yellow's proposals and the latest info. You may obtain it by contacting TDU. Free to TDU members, others please include a donation.

Solidarity Spreads at Kroger

While contract negotiations at Nashville are temporarily on hold, a rank-and-file solidarity network continues to grow throughout the Kroger system. In Atlanta, where the contract with Local 528 expires in September, a TDU meeting for Kroger Teamsters featured guest speakers from the Nashville facility.

Nashville Local 327 members rejected Kroger's concessionary contract proposals for the fourth time in January. Negotiating team member Roger Rotoni and stewards Roger Rigsby and Chris Farris brought the Atlanta members up-to-date on the status of negotiations and on how the rank and file has taken a leadership role. They encouraged warehouse workers and drivers in Atlanta to increase communication among themselves with the aim of building solidarity for the best contract for all.

"We're looking forward to working not only with Nashville employees but with Kroger employees nationwide toward a true national agreement that we all need. Fortunately, our new IBT leadership understands this need and shares these goals," said Atlanta driver and steward Ken Hilbish.

Members at the Atlanta meeting discussed key issues for their upcoming contract, including their second-rate pension, H&W and Kroger's inhumane production quotas. Although Kroger has a "national agreement," it is weak and incomparable to national agreements in the freight industry because contracts at some 30 local unions have varying expiration dates. Members at the Atlanta meeting expressed their concern for more coordinated bargaining and movement toward a true national master agreement.

International VP Doug Mims attended the meeting to extend the International union's solidarity to the members at Kroger. While Nashville negotiations continue, the rank and file network is spreading to Little Rock, Louisville, Cincinnati, and other Kroger distribution centers, where members are distributing TDU's Kroger Contract Bulletins. Interest in and support for the Nashville struggle is growing.

At the meeting a presentation was made on Kroger finances. In 1988 the company took on heavy debt to fight off a hostile takeover. It has been recovering remarkably since, posting net profits (after taxes) of $82 million in 1990. Preliminary reports showed net profits of $117 million in 1991 and financial analysts project net profits of $176 million this year. Kroger reported net sales of $21.35 billion in 1991, making it the nation's largest supermarket chain.

While the company is crying poor to Teamster and UFCW employees, the rewards to corporate executives do not reflect a tight wallet. The top five corporate executives, including CEO Joe Pichler and former chairman Lyle Everingham, received cash compensation alone of more than $3 million in 1990.

LOCAL UNION, MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

New Teamsters Union Turns Around Nestle Disaster

In a stunning turnabout the New Teamsters, with the active intervention of General President Ron Carey and IBT Vice President Ken Mee, won a major victory at Nestle in Bakersfield, Calif., correcting a sin of the Teamster past.

In 1988, Nestle, then called Carnation, came to Bakersfield and built a huge, fully automated ice cream plant. When the plant was preparing to open, Carnation approached Local 87 and struck a quick deal. Carnation, seeking to avert an organizing drive by the Operating Engineers, offered Local 87 wall-to-wall representation in exchange for a "sweetheart agreement."

But first Local 87 had to obtain a majority of union authorization cards. This proved to be a major stumbling block. The Operating Engineers were moving in and Carnation grew desperate. It called on Local 87 to provide some "temporary clean-up" employees for a special project to last a few weeks.

Only after the Teamsters dispatched them did the card-check produce a narrow Teamster victory. Contract negotiations got underway quickly, and after a few hours, an agreement was reached and ratified almost overnight by employees who scarcely knew what they were voting on.

Before the agreement could be fully blessed the Operating Engineers filed unfair labor practice charges. Amazingly, an administrative law judge ruled against the OE saying "... a few forged Authorization Cards were no big deal."

The case languished in the courts for over a year until the fall of 1991, when new hearings were ordered. By then the old leadership had been turned out of office and a new leadership, not interested in sweetheart deals, elected. During new contract negotiations Nestle, never interested in bargaining with a real union, withdrew recognition and walked out of the negotiations. The new leadership of Local 87 responded by forming an alliance with the Operating Engineers and filing a joint petition with the NLRB. Caught by surprise the company insisted that Local 87 refund nearly $250,000 in back dues and initiation fees collected from its employees over the past three years. Local 87 complied, thereby forcing Nestle into a quick representation election, which was run on March 13.

Enter new IBT Vice President Mee, who came to Bakersfield shortly before the election with a mission in mind—Nestle was not going to win! Despite the sorry history that had soured the workers on unions and that they were being subjected to a barrage of captive audience meetings and misleading literature, Mee and Ward Allen of Local 87 were determined to see the New Teamsters prevail.

President Ron Carey campaigns for Teamster representation at Nestle.

They campaigned 20 hours a day and called upon the International and Teamster leaders throughout California to help. Carey came to Bakersfield the day before the election to help leaflet the plant and to address a mass meeting of employees, urging them to have faith in the New Teamsters union. The IBT also filed a $20 million labor-racketeering lawsuit against both company and past union officials for their "top-down deal." Other Western Conference Teamster leaders came in to lend a hand: WCT Director Tom Shay, IBT Vice President Jim Benson, Nobby Miller, Jack Cox and many others.

On March 13 their efforts paid off. The Teamsters and Operating Engineers beat the company 192 to 126—a resounding victory putting the Nestle workers on the road to true unionism.

New Teamsters, Yes

continued from page 1

rental outlets all over the country. Rank and filers immediately responded. More than 100 Teamsters in Los Angeles and Miami showed up to protest against Ryder's use of non-union, double-breasted operations. In the West, members and local officers took it from there, hitting scores of Ryder outlets across a multi-state area (see page 4).

Purity Supreme Closing

In Massachusetts, over 1,500 Teamsters and their families joined Carey in a march and rally to protest the closing of a Purity Supreme grocery distribution center that will put over 500 Teamsters out of work (see page 9). Teamsters are handbilling Purity stores all over the region. Taking a tactic from the Carey campaign, a group of rank and filers have started phone banking shoppers, and have cut sales at one of Purity's most profitable stores by 47%.

Kroger Network Building

In Nashville, Tenn., Kroger Teamsters have voted down contract concessions four times. Kroger Teamsters in other cities have distributed thousands of flyers about the Nashville showdown. Visits between Kroger Teamsters in Nashville and Atlanta have strengthened the solidarity between those two groups as the Atlanta workers enter their contract negotiations this year (see page 9).

In Bakersfield, Calif., the IBT beat back a decertification effort, correcting a sin of the Teamster past (see above). Workers at a Nestle ice cream plant were forced to join the Teamsters in 1988 under a union-management plot that included forging authorization cards and signing a "sweetheart" union contract to keep another union out of the plant. Despite this sorry history of collusion, Carey, Western Conference VP Ken Mee and new leadership in Local 87 convinced the workers to have faith in the New Teamsters union, and won the election by a strong majority.

Turnout at TDU Meetings Jumps

This same jump in rank and file activity around the union has also led to a big increase in TDU recruitment and attendance at TDU meetings. It comes from the same source of excitement. The image and actions of the union are changing, and rank and filers want to learn what's going on and get involved.

This is what it will take to turn our union around, building on the historic election victory, and mobilizing the activities of more and more members. The top leadership of our union and the rank and file are in a partnership. They are feeding on each other's energy, each pushing the other to take another step further. If we are to meet the tests our employers will throw at us and organize the unorganized, this trend must get even stronger.

N.J.- N.Y. Soft Drink Deadlock Tightens

New Jersey Local 125 held a special Coke meeting on March 15. Coke is selectively implementing an offer that would establish a new low "floor" for future negotiations at all soft drink companies in the region, which are controlled by two companies.

Recently eight Local 125 members were terminated for being on disability over one year. This is a no-cost item for Coke and an obvious provocation. The meeting unanimously rejected management's ultimatum and backed Local 125's executive board.

Canada Dry on March 19 forced through a contract that breaks previous pension parity among the area's major soft drink contracts. Employer threats to close production (as they had at Seven Up) and a lack of confidence in Local 812 affected this vote.

The *Daily Times* last Nov. 14 covered Pepsi's two-day lockout in Mt. Vernon, reporting, "Union workers said the company was trying to force them into ratifying a contract similar to the one accepted by workers at the company's other divisions and by rivals at Coca-Cola Bottling Company of New York. The contracts were negotiated by ... Local 812."

The situation is before the IBT General Executive Board through charges against the local's officers by over 100 Local 812 members at Coke. The GEB has the power to minimize the damage and begin rebuilding with a strong, democratic alternative.

There was an undisputed effort by the Local 812 board to set up a new non-Teamster union. At the same time, the union vote on the proposed contract at Coke of New York in the New York City area violated standards for a "fair and meaningful vote."

As these charges await action, Local 812 officials are having a petition circulated at Coke that tries to establish the officers' support. People refusing to sign have been threatened with "having their books pulled." Management has aided working foremen and stewards circulating the petition.

The situation in the Northeast is not unusual. The beverage distribution section of our union has been under attack by big distributors. One new opportunity for the New Teamsters is to begin the long, steady road back to union strength and membership security and dignity.

LETTERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

The Fight Goes on In Pa. Local 429

I am writing with an update on our Local 429 TDU meeting in Reading, Pa., which you reported on in the March issue of *Convoy Dispatch*. Your article stated that the Local 429 principal officer was in attendance, which he was. He stated that our local is run in accord with many of TDU's principles. I'll let you be the judge.

At this meeting a group of employees from Quaker Maid Kitchens presented Mr. Burns with a petition to elect a shop steward. There are approximately 300 employees at Quaker Maid, and this petition had 140 names on it. A week later an updated petition with 200 names on it was sent to Burns by registered mail. This represents 66% of the employees. They gave Burns a 20-day reply period, and he has not even had the courtesy to give an official answer. But he let it be known through the shop steward and committeemen that there will be no election and the appointed steward will stay. Until this last steward was appointed two and a half years ago, all stewards at Quaker Maid were elected.

The people at Quaker Maid who stood up and demanded this election are now being harassed. Threats of being fired or moved to a lower-paying department are just a few. The union allows the company to do this by stating "lack of merit" on grievances.

Burns also runs both the pension and health and welfare plans. The plans cover eight locals, which Burns will not allow to have any representation. When I asked about this he stated, "That's the way it was set up and that's the way it is."

Before the International election Burns and I argued over issues, and when I presented my views his answer was, "That's TDU bullshit. I will not allow TDU in this local, and whoever brings it in will find themselves on the outside looking in."

TDU's principles? Not in my opinion. It's more like a dictatorship to me.

So the fight goes on and we in Reading, Pa., will not give in. We've started a chapter of TDU here, and the movement is now growing!

Don Riccio
Local 429, New Penn Truck Lines
Reading, Pa.

"... and even though the management has refused to provide us with better safety conditions, they did agree to slaughter us more humanely."

New Faith in Our Teamsters Union

A friend of mine gave me a copy of *Convoy Dispatch*. I had heard of TDU years ago, but at the time I thought it was probably just another way to get a few dollars from a brother Teamster, so I just forgot about it.

I am very glad to see Ron Carey get elected and make some effort at cleaning up our union, for I had lost faith in the union long ago. As usual I did not even get a ballot.

I am a Teamster and have been since 1972. So much has happened in those years: getting blackballed for five years; hired and fired eight or 10 times for fighting for my rights; at least 15 jobs, two of them with 70% contracts (Snider and Smith Transfer); always on the bottom of the list. I got to the point that I didn't even know who was in office or care.

I do hope that god will help Ron Carey do his job and save the union. I joined TDU March 12, 1992.

David Chandler
Local 600, Ryder Distribution
St. Louis

Time for New Attitude at Yellow

The following letter was sent to George Powell Jr., Yellow Freight chairman.

In these tumultuous economic times when our country is faced with myriad threats from both within and without our borders, it behooves all of us who believe in the American way to make every effort to improve the competitive position of those American companies who have made our standard of living the greatest the world has ever known.

It is with this in mind that I, Pete Angrick, city driver and steward at the Indianapolis terminal of Yellow Freight System, write this letter.

We have here in Indianapolis a working environment which I believe subtracts from rather than contributes to making Yellow a more productive, profitable and pleasurable place to work. It is not all that far-fetched to suggest that in some ways the environment in Indy is not all that different from that of the Oklahoma post office where the tension produced by constant managerial bickering and nitpicking exploded with tragic consequences. Such an atmosphere does not bode well for either Yellow or its employees, particularly in this time of deregulation and recession.

Over the years, Yellow has provided my fellow drivers, our families and me a very good living. I know that I speak for all my fellow local drivers and dockmen when I say that I am truly appreciative and that I hope to do everything I can to ensure that we at Yellow remain at the top of the trucking business. After all, Yellow and its employees are bound together economically. If Yellow were ever to go bottoms up, those of us who have spent many years with Yellow would follow.

The election of General President Ron Carey is giving the Teamsters a fresh, new beginning. What better time to give us in Indy likewise a fresh, new beginning. One that has at its heart a spirit of cooperation rather than obstinate intimidation.

Pete Angrick
Local 135, Yellow Freight
Indianapolis

'Bring Pride Back To All Teamsters'

Thanks again for extending the invitation to join TDU. I have been a member for some time now in spirit and support. I have a completed application that's been in, on and around my dresser for over two years. Procrastination!

I have finally closed the chapter on this delay and my application and check to join TDU are enclosed.

As the shop steward at Allied Systems in Smyrna, Tenn., I am well aware of the need for this fine watchdog organization. Our Local 327 has had several problems over the years. Hopefully, with Ron Carey's election, help from his slate and support from the rank and file, many locals can continue the surge from the roots on up to the top to once again bring pride back to all Teamsters. We must educate, organize and reform.

Matthew Studd
Local 327, Allied Systems
Nashville, Tenn.

Let's Now March To Greater Victories

Congratulations TDU!

Reading the latest issue of *Convoy Dispatch* (Feb. 1992 #111), where you devoted much of the paper to the role of TDU and rank and file Teamsters in the precedent-setting victory of Ron Carey and his ticket, moved me so much I just had to write to you.

Your clear, precise analysis, direction and down-to-earth language showing the way for the rank and file showed me that the "New Teamsters Union" has a reliable, capable ally—TDU.

It also showed your knowledge of rank-and-file trade unionism. I'm so proud of your staff.

But I must say one additional point about the greatest rank and file leader I've ever known (and I've been involved in rank and file activity for over 40 years), and that is Ken Paff.

He has guided us consistently from the very beginning, always positive and confident, instilling in us hope, faith and encouragement during very difficult times, with personal sacrifice and honesty.

If I may, we Greeks have a way of showing love, respect and honor—I embrace TDU, the staff, steering committee and Ken Paff.

We will march to more and greater victories.

Nick Kourambis
Local 560, retired
Leonia, N.J.

TDU Meets

Atlanta
Saturday, April 4
7:30 p.m.
College Park Fire Department
Sullivan Rd.
College Park, Ga.

Boston
Saturday, April 11
10 a.m.
Comfort Inn
Dedham, Mass. (Exit 15A off 128)
Saturday, May 16
Grievance workshop
Time & place to be announced

Connecticut
Sunday, April 12
10 a.m.
Red Gull Inn
Schraffts Drive
Waterbury, Conn.

East Bay Chapter
Call (510) 658-7159
Oakland, Calif.

Portland
Sunday, April 26
3 p.m.
Portland Police Athletic Assn.
618 S.E. Alder

Phoenix
Saturday, April 25
3 p.m.
9043 N. 36 Dr.

St. Louis
Sunday, April 26
11 a.m.
St. Charles Red Cross Office
516 S. Fifth St.
St. Charles, Mo.

San Francisco
Saturday, April 11
10 a.m. - noon
Potero Hill Neighborhood House
953 DeHaro St.
at Southern Hts. Ave.

Toronto
Sunday, April 5
10 a.m.
Victoria Park Arena
Avondale Blvd.
Brampton, Ont.

Wilkes-Barre
Workers Compensation Seminar
Saturday, April 4
1 p.m.
VFW Post 5267
San Souci Parkway

How Can TDU Get By on $30 a Year in Dues?

TDU has won some great victories in the last few years: majority rule, the Right to Vote, and using that vote to elect the Carey team. We've also helped hundreds of thousands of members organize to win grievances, better contracts, fair pensions, safety rights and more.

All of that on $30 per member per year? Sure, we're careful with that money, and we use lots of volunteer help. And some related educational programs are sponsored by our legal defense fund, TRF. But still, that leaves a lot to be covered by $30 a year in dues. How can TDU do it?

We Can't!

Lots of members give more than $30 to TDU each year. TDU depends on those voluntary donations as much as on dues. We know a lot of Teamsters can't afford to donate $200 or $500, even in small monthly payments. But if you can, and you believe in keeping TDU strong, please mail in the form below today.

The union will be that much stronger.

All donations are greatly appreciated. We know $5 or $10 is important when it's coming out of your own pocket; and every single donation like that helps TDU.

Those who really dig deep—give $200 or more, or make a pledge of $20 per month for one year— will get special recognition:

- *You'll receive a beautiful TDU-emblem lapel pin, to wear and let others know you're a special TDU builder.*
- *And, with your permission, your name will be printed in the TDU Convention program book, for TDU's most important event of the year.*

Yes, I Can Help

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my donation of ❑ $200 ❑ $100 ❑ $50 ❑ $20 ❑ $10 other _____

❑ check or money order

❑ Visa/Mastercard #_____ exp. date ____/____

❑ I pledge a monthly donation of ❑ $25/month ❑ $20/month ❑ $10/month

❑ I want to join! Use $30 of my payment for TDU membership dues.
(Please fill out and enclose the membership form on page 1.)

TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, and from individual retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers.

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210